

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 INR-07 L-03

CIAE-00 /046 W

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P R 230540Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4859

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL UDORN

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI//USDAO//UDORN

CINCPAC

CINCPACAF

JCS WASHDC

COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 4950

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, LA, TH

SUBJ: LAOTIAN MAP AIRCRAFT AND TRUCKS AT UDORN

REF: A. BANGKOK 14527 (190601Z JUL 75) (NOTAL)

B. VIENTIANE 4090 (081115Z JUN 75) (NOTAL)

1. WE AGREE WITH BANGKOK (REF A) THAT DEPARTMENT'S EARLIEST INSTRUCTIONS ARE REQUIRED ON HANDLING OF LAO MAP AIRCRAFT AND TRUCKS AT UDORN, WHOSE RETURN PGNU HAS NOW OFFICIALLY REQUESTED OF RTG.

2. OUR RECOMMENDATION, AS PREVIOUSLY STATED (REF B), IS THAT AIRCRAFT AND TRUCKS BE RETURNED TO LAOS WITHOUT OBSTRUCTION ON OUR PART. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS INFLUENCED IN PART BY KNOWLEDGE THAT WITHOUT MAINTENANCE BEYOND WHAT LAO THEMSELVES CAN PERFORM THESE AIRCRAFT WILL PROBABLY NOT BE FLYABLE FOR MORE THAN A FEW WEEKS (IN CASE OF T-28'S) OR POSSIBLY A COUPLE OF MONTHS (IN CASE OF C-123'S). IN OTHER WORDS, THE AIRCRAFT WILL NOT REPRESENT AN OFFENSIVE
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THREAT TO ANYONE, AND THEIR VALUE TO USG IS NEGLIGIBLE.

3. BANGKOK EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER EFFECT ON U.S.-LAO RELATIONS IF AIRCRAFT AND TRUCKS ARE NOT RETURNED. SOME SUCH EFFECT IS CERTAINLY POSSIBLE AND EVEN LIKELY, BUT OF NO GREAT CONSEQUENCE. WE ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE EFFECT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND THAILAND AND BETWEEN THAILAND AND LAOS; WE ASSUME IT WOULD BE MOST DISADVANTAGEOUS FOR U.S.-THAI RELATIONS IF RTG WERE AGAIN PLACED IN POSITION OF HAVING TO DEAL WITH CONFLICTING CLAIMS TO MAP AIRCRAFT, AT A TIME WHEN LAO-THAI RELATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY STRAINED BY BORDER INCIDENTS, CLOSING OF THAI CONSULATES, AND ABOVE ALL PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBER OF MEO AND ETHNIC LAO REFUGEES ON THAI SOIL. WE BELIEVE OUR CONSENT TO A PROMPT AND FAVORABLE THAI REPLY TO THE LAO NOTE MIGHT HELP RELATIONS ALL AROUND AT NO SIGNIFICANT COST TO THE USG.

4. WE ASSUME ONE POINT PROMINENT IN WASHINGTON CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROBLEM IS IMPLICATION OF ANY ACTION WITH RESPECT TO LAO MAP/MASF EQUIPMENT FOR REMAINING AIRCRAFT, ETC., FROM SOUTH VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA. WE SHOULD THINK THAT DISTINCTION IS POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE BETWEEN RLG AND ITS SUCCESSOR PGNU, WITH WHICH WE STILL HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND NEW REGIMES IN SVN AND CBKZMODIA WITH WHICH WE DO NOT.

CHAPMAN

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Message Attributes

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